

# DEP/BWSC Environmental Justice 2003 Final Report

**All Massachusetts citizens are entitled to equal protection from environmental harm regardless of income level, ethnicity, or language.**

## **Executive Summary:**

In FY2003 DEP spent \$800,000 on environmental assessment and risk reduction at 21E sites located in EJ areas across Massachusetts. DEP and EOEA met with cities and community groups in the winter and spring to get input on site selection. Eight sites in seven communities were identified, with priority given to sites where unknown levels of contamination, and unknown risk, were of concern to community and hampered future development. Work was successfully completed in spring and summer of 2003. Redevelopment plans for several of the sites are moving ahead thanks in part to the work conducted by DEP. Additional funding in FY2004 would allow DEP to conduct work on other sites like these in other parts of the Commonwealth.

**Dorchester  
191 Bowdoin St.  
RTN 3-022682**

*"If ...we develop the community center there, this tank removal will have been a huge contribution to the success of the project." - Dorchester Bay Economic Development Corporation*



The former owners of the gasoline station at the 191 Bowdoin St. property left four large underground storage tanks (USTs) full of gasoline and waste oil in

place when they abandoned the property. The City of Boston took the property for tax title and has been working with many very active neighborhood groups (including the Greater Bowdoin Geneva Neighborhood Association, the Bowdoin Street Health Center, City Links, Tebroc Levant Neighborhood Association, and Meetinghouse Hill Association) and the Dorchester Bay Economic Development Corporation to move towards their dream of redeveloping this blighted property into a multi-use Community Center.

After a well-attended meeting with the community on April 24, 2003, DEP determined that there was strong support for this project, and decided to move ahead with the tank removals.

Four USTs were removed from the property, 1,660 gallons of gasoline/water mixture were recovered from three tanks ranging in size from 4,000 to 6,000 gallons, 125 gallons of waste oil were recovered from a fourth tank, 3 drums of sludge were removed, 20 tons of petroleum-contaminated soil was removed, and the excavation was backfilled. The cost of the project was \$28,000.

This spring the City of Boston put an RFP out for redevelopment of the property, and awarded the Community Center design and development project to the Dorchester Bay Economic Development Corporation.

**Lowell**  
**Commonwealth Chemical**  
**RTN 3-0000349**



This abandoned parcel is located in a mixed residential and commercial neighborhood, and had been used in the past as a coal, petroleum, and chemical storage facility. In the 1980s, EPA and DEP removed aboveground storage

tanks and drums and conducted environmental assessment work. Groundwater contamination was found at the site. DEP installed and still maintains an oil-water separator. The City of Lowell is considering a tax taking.

At a February 2003 community meeting, DEP proposed conducting additional assessment work to determine the current conditions at the site. Local residents expressed concern about the potential hazards the site might pose to their children, and supported the proposed assessment project.

A Phase II Comprehensive Site Assessment was conducted, which included review of records, a ground penetrating radar study, installation of soil borings and groundwater monitoring wells, soil and groundwater sampling and analysis, and risk assessment.

Results of the Phase II work indicate that no imminent hazard is posed by the site, and confirm that the oil/water separator has been effective at reducing levels of floating oil. Soil and groundwater contamination still exist at the site and will require additional work to address. The cost of this project was \$84,000.

**Lawrence**  
**92 Broadway**  
**RTN 3-20912**



In July 2001, #4 fuel oil was found bubbling up in an alleyway from a forgotten 5,000-plus gallon underground storage tank. Ownership of the land and responsibility for the required cleanup was unclear; DEP Emergency Response contractors were called out to remove and dispose of 4,900 gallons of oil and stabilize the situation while a responsible party was identified. The tank was secured and left in place. The tank eventually filled with rainwater, and since it still contained sludge, heavy rains caused oily water to flow out onto the street.

Although a deed search was conducted to determine ownership of the alley and tank, deed records of all abutting properties specifically excluded the alleyway and no ownership of the tank or land could be determined.

DEP contacted the City of Lawrence Planning Department and a representative of a local community group, and based on the positive feedback received, decided to proceed with a tank removal or abandonment project. Notices explaining the project were issued to abutting businesses and city officials.

Due to concerns about damaging the adjacent buildings during removal operations, DEP elected to abandon the tank in place. Analysis of soil samples from borings installed around the tank indicated no significant impact. 5,000 gallons of oil/water mixture and 9 drums of sludge were removed and disposed of, and the tank was cleaned and filled with 25 cubic yards of concrete slurry mixture in accordance with the State Fire Marshall's Regulations. As a result of this work the site will be closed out. The cost of the project was \$20,000.

### **Springfield**

**106-112 Carew St.**

**Bay State Transportation; RTN 1-0000307**

**Yankee Oil; RTN 1-0010936**

DEP met with the City of Springfield and with the New North End Citizens Group in October 2002 to get input on site selection. Two abandoned auto body shops located in the densely populated North End residential area ranked as high priority by both groups. The City had taken these properties for back taxes. The properties were listed 21E sites, but because they had been abandoned before any assessment had been conducted, the hazard posed was unknown.

Before assessment work began, buildings and properties were cleared of debris and potentially hazardous materials that hindered access. 44 drums of hazardous materials were removed, along with two 40-yard roll-offs full of debris. After this initial work was completed, assessment work was conducted, including collecting and analyzing subsurface soil samples at 20 locations across the site, and installing monitoring wells to determine the extent of groundwater contamination.

Work was completed in late June 2003. No imminent hazards were identified, but geophysical work identified locations of several underground storage tanks, which will need to be removed or abandoned in place. Groundwater and soil sampling confirmed that residual soil and groundwater contamination exist, and additional assessment and/or removal actions may be needed. The cost of the project was \$69,000.

**New Bedford**  
**Alden Corrugated Box**  
**One Church St.**  
**RTN 4-0017536**

The former Alden Corrugated Box property had been taken by the City of New Bedford for back taxes. Four large underground storage tanks (two 30,000 gallon tanks and two 4,000 gallon tanks) containing approximately 30,000 gallons of oil/water/sludge mixture remained in place at the site. A damaged manway on a tank located adjacent to the street resulted in releases of oil during heavy rains and flooding events, and also presented a significant safety hazard to passers-by. A residential complex is located directly across the street from the site. After receiving positive feedback at a well-attended Community Meeting on December 19, 2002, DEP decided to proceed with the project.

**Alden Corrugated Box**



20,400 gallons of oil/water mix and 37 tons of sludge were removed and disposed of, the tanks were cleaned and removed, and the excavation back-filled. The cost of this project was \$80,000.

**Brockton**  
**Montello's Autobody**  
**166 East Ashland St.**

*"Brockton considers building sports bubble at brownfields site"*

*"The state Department of Environmental Protection has designated the [Montello Auto Body Site] an environmental justice Initiative project...as the work is underway, the city is looking to attract a developer to build a sport bubble there"*  
- Brockton Enterprise



The City of Brockton has a very active planning and redevelopment department that aggressively pursues redevelopment resources for the properties it has taken for tax title. DEP worked closely with the City of Brockton to identify

candidate sites. Montello Autobody, located in a residential area and currently subject to frequent trespassing by children and by the homeless, was a priority for both the City and the local community, who have plans to transform this property into a sports bubble and soccer field.

#### **Montello's Autobody**



This abandoned property became a popular illegal dumping ground for drums and asbestos-containing material (ACM) such as discarded roofing tiles. Large piles of ACM mixed with crushed drums and soil had accumulated at the site.

Councilors Daley and Dinapoli, and a Mayor's office representative all expressed interest in and support for this project at the April 2003 community meeting. DEP decided to proceed with the project based on this feedback.

Once work began, more asbestos-containing material than expected was uncovered at the site; in all, 106 truckloads carrying 3,646 tons of ACM were removed from soil piles at the site. The cost of the project was \$453,000.

**Garrepy Plating  
722 Plantation St.  
RTN 2-0013541; 2-0000629**

The Garrepy Plating Company went out of business in 1999, leaving behind significant quantities of hazardous materials (plating chemicals, acids, metals.) In 2001/2002 EPA conducted a removal action to dispose of all hazardous materials and processing equipment. EPA addressed the immediate threat, but assessment of potential groundwater contamination needed to be done; the property is located in close proximity to Lake Quinsigamond and to municipal wells in Worcester and Shrewsbury, and plating wastes can be very hazardous.

**Garrepy Plating**



DEP and City of Worcester held a community meeting in May 2003 and learned that the community supported the proposed Phase 1 Initial Site Assessment work, and DEP proceeded with installation of multi-level monitoring wells, soil borings, and soil and groundwater sampling and analysis.

Evaluation of data collected provided good news: no imminent hazards exist at the site, and although low levels of contaminants were detected in a few samples, the soil and groundwater at the site were not significantly impacted by plating operations, and little additional work would be required to bring the site into compliance.

The City of Worcester recently took title to the property and is in the process of selling it via public auction. Interest in redeveloping this property has increased now that DEP's work has shown that the site is not significantly contaminated. The cost of the work was \$88,000.

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